

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application is requested. Claims 1-13 remain active in the application subsequent to entry of this Amendment.

The instructions to amend the claims as shown above are based upon the claims as presented in the Amendment filed April 9, 2004.

The claims have been amended in order to more particularly point out and distinctly claim that which applicants regard as their invention and to address the examiner's comments in item 1 as well as the first full paragraph of page 9 of the Official Action.

In their specification applicants describe and illustrate a method of forming a substrate blank by press-molding a glass in a softened state using an upper mold member having a molding surface and a lower mold member having a molding surface. Molding surfaces are discussed in paragraph [0021] as well as the discussion of the drawings in paragraph [0029].

Throughout their specification applicants emphasize that the press-molding method requires the glass in a softened state to come in contact with the two molding surfaces. In the process the two molding surfaces approach each other and, as illustrated in Figure 2 of the drawings, the downward movement of the upper mold member 4 is controlled so that there is no level difference between the molding surface of the upper mold member 4 and the surface to be formed with the upper sleeve; *see* the paragraph bridging pages 13 and 14 of the specification and compare with the discussion in the first six lines of page 4 of the Official Action.

Throughout the description applicants take care that the molded article has a surrounding edge portion that does not come in contact with parts of the mold including, for instance, the mold members or parts such as sleeve 5 and the upper sleeve (both illustrated in Figure 2 of the drawings) and is discussed in paragraph [0029] as well as the molding surfaces. See also the discussion in paragraph [0033] "The pressing pressure and the pressing time period are determined as required for attaining conditions where the surrounding edge portion of a molded article under ... production does not come into contact with the mold". Note also the description in paragraph [0021] "When the surrounding edge portion of a blank that is being produced is not brought into contact with a mold during its press-molding, that is, when the above surrounding edge portion is not defined, the surrounding edge portion forms a free surface. This free surface

is a surface to which nothing from the molding surface of the mold is transferred, so that no processing mark existing in the molding surface is transferred".

Stated another way, the edge portion of the blank being formed does not come into contact with the molding surface or other parts of the mold such that a free surface - extending from the area between the two opposing and pressed molding surfaces - is untouched.

In contrast to the present invention, as explained in applicants' comparative example (see paragraph [0042]) the conventional molding method is one "in which the surrounding edge portion of the blank under production came into contact with the mold". This, in turn, resulted in an unsuitable product. See the discussion in paragraphs [0044] and [0045] following the data provided in Table 1.

The amendments to the claims also follow the examiner's suggestions in the first full paragraph, second sentence of the Action. These amendments therefore address and resolve the rejection stated in item 1 of the Official Action. In addition, they also serve to further distinguish the claims from the newly cited and applied prior art in items 2-6 of the Official Action. For instance, in Murakami, particularly in Figure 10, as discussed in the current Official Action, does not result in a pressed glass article having a free surface but instead comes in contact with parts of the mold in addition to the two molding surfaces.

Similarly, the procedure described in Suzuki JP 10-194760 allows the circumferential edge of the glass blank to touch the mold sleeve 36, a situation which is excluded by applicants' claims.

Newly cited JP 63-265833 to Inoue et al describes forming a lens blank however the outer circumference of the lens blank comes into contact with support members 14 and 15 as shown in Figure 2 of that reference and as reproduced (with annotations of an unknown source) on page 6 of the Official Action.

In the same manner, Sato U.S. 4,951,373 uses supports 3 to contact the outer circumference of the lens blank being prepared and again, this falls outside the claims of the present application.

With regard to the rejection directed towards claims 11-13, these claims depend from novel and inventive claims and therefore are patentable by virtue of their dependency.

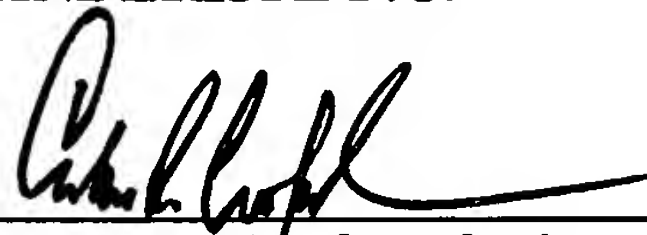
Reconsideration and favorable action are solicited.

MURAKAMI, Akira
Appl. No. 10/058,236
May 27, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

By:



Arthur R. Crawford
Reg. No. 25,327

ARC:eaw
1100 North Glebe Road, 8th Floor
Arlington, VA 22201-4714
Telephone: (703) 816-4000
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100